

TENNESSEANS BORN PLAYERS OF POLITICS

Have Been Enthusiastic Supporters of Office-Seeking Game Since Earliest History—Women's Votes Uncertain Factor in Presidential Election This Year.

BY ARTHUR J. FORBES

The favorite game of Tennessee from time when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, has been the game of politics. Since the earliest days of the history of the Volunteer state, the leaders in politics have been past masters in that most interesting game. In fact, it might truthfully be said, that the sons of Tennessee are ever as ready to volunteer to run for office as they are to volunteer in defense of their country's honor.

John Sevier and James Robertson, early leaders of the pioneers who settled the eastern portion of the state, coming from their former homes in Virginia and the Carolinas, proved that they knew something about the politics of those early days by organizing the Watauga association and securing representation in the old North Carolina assembly.

They were back in 1772. Later Daniel Boone and his associates organized another embryo commonwealth called Transylvania, and pushed as far west as the present site of Nashville. Ten or twelve years later when North Carolina ceded to the general government the territory which later became the state of Tennessee, John Sevier and his friends refused to surrender their rights to run for and hold office of which John Sevier became governor and established the state of Franklin, of which John Sevier became governor.

William Blount was made its governor and held office for several years, the seat of government being at Knoxville. In 1794 a constitutional convention was held, and in June of that year Tennessee became a state. That is all ancient history, but it shows that the people in those days were both patriots and politicians.

They were patriots first and politicians second, however. That is the difference between those old worthies and some of our present day politicians who are frequently accused of putting politics first in their careers.

Since then politics has been developed more as a profession perhaps, but it is shared with no more enthusiasm and interest than it was 150 years ago.

The good year of 1920 will provide several interesting political contests in Tennessee. In August there will be general county elections in each of the 95 counties of the state for the election of county trustees, sheriff, and tax assessor and in many of the counties several other municipal offices. The clerks of the various courts and the magistrates are not elected in Tennessee this year.

This is also a presidential year, and the two great parties' struggle for supremacy in the national election will be participated in next fall by the people of Tennessee.

The state will also on the same date, the first Tuesday in November, elect a governor and members of the general assembly.

Some of the most interesting con-

tests during the early months of the year will be those for election as delegates from the congressional districts and from the state-at-large to the two great national conventions. There is promise of a particularly sharp fight in the state conventions which will each choose four delegates to the national gatherings.

February is much too early for political prophets to begin any predictions as to the outcome in Tennessee so far as individual candidates are concerned. By April, political pots, large and small, will begin bubbling, and soon it is expected that candidates will begin to take notice, and start out after votes in the nominating conventions or primaries. A few are ready to announce their wish to serve the people even now.

Tennessee is a democratic state by at least a 50,000 majority, except when there is a factional fight within the party, which on occasion has brought about the election of a republican as governor. There is no factional cloud upon the political horizon this year and whoever gets the democratic nomination for governor will be elected in November. Also, the state is safely democratic as to the presidential election, in spite of probable efforts by state Republican leaders to persuade their national committee that Tennessee could be made a profitable battle ground this year.

There will be only one new thing in the presidential election in Tennessee. That will be the vote of the women, who voted for the first time in the history of this state in 1919 in municipal elections, and who will be privileged to vote for presidential electors in November.

In the municipal elections, the women's votes in every city in the state, were cast last year for those candidates whose record seemed to promise most for the improvement of the schools and for those other things in which women are particularly interested.

If some big national issue should arise in the presidential election which appealed especially to women, there might be a possibility that the customary results in such states as Tennessee might be overturned.

But at this time, there seems no probability of such an issue being presented and politicians who try to keep in touch with popular sentiment, believe that as a majority of the men have voted in the past, so will a majority of the women vote in the coming presidential election.

But that remains to be seen. It might also be added, that the women of Tennessee, so far as they have gone in politics, have shown that they understand the game quite as well as do the men. They have been active in political lobbies for the past ten years, and won the partial right of suffrage by their clever campaigning. Politicians who ignore the votes of the million women of Tennessee will do so at their peril.

Storm Sweeps Tar Off Of Vessel

NEW YORK—Reporting the loss of a

member of the crew who was swept overboard during a severe gale, the transport George Washington docked at Hoboken with 824 casual officers and enlisted men from the American expeditionary force and 50 brides. Despite orders from the captain that

no one should go on deck, Fred Allonack, ordinary seaman, ventured across an exposed portion of the deck and was swept overboard. The vessel was hove to at once, but Allonack's body was not recovered.

SARCASM.

"I am going into this station and fill my fountain pen with ink. A writer, you know, must always be ready to jot down a masterpiece."

"Yes, and if you could go into a no-

tion store and fill it with notions, you'd do well."

WORM TO BLAME.

Two miners went on a fishing expe-

dition. But they were serious at the game.

"How are ya gettin' on, Jack?" asked one.

"Oh, simply rotten!" was the reply. "I don't believe my blood's worms are tryin'!"

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Early Days In West Tennessee

BY W. V. BARRY.

Having been born and partly reared in McNairy or "Snake" county, West Tennessee, where my father, the late Dr. Daniel Barry, practiced medicine from 1852 until nearly 1870, with two periods of residence in Memphis between those dates, I have long had a "hankering" to write something of events which occurred in my own knowledge and others of which I was told, that transpired in that county and the county site town, Purdy, which as a town has long since been wiped clean from the map.

The first subject I shall attempt, will be in connection with the Chamness family, of whom "Old John" was the pioneer in that county. In the very early days of McNairy county, it has been handed down in tradition that on John ran down a wolf, on foot, and killed the animal with a pocket knife. During the civil war of 1861-1865, it was said that time and again he bet and won the liquor on the wager that he, on foot, could beat an average horse in a race of two or three miles.

I do not intend to cast any reflections on any of the family who may be living today, but those who talked to me in my younger days, telling of happenings in the career of old John Chamness, did not give him a very good name—for instance: In a certain community, it was said that a man named Riley Hastings left home, went to the neighborhood with his family and, as the neighborhood was a quiet one, notwithstanding it was war time, they left the doors to their home unfastened. Having to go back home alone, for some reason, Hastings, as he approached the house, met old John Chamness carrying on his back a pack of the Hastings' household goods. Hastings was so enraged that he knocked old man Chamness in the head with a rifle that he (Hastings) carried, breaking the gun in two at the breech, and he told it afterward that he punched the breech of the broken gun into Chamness' skull, left him for dead and went off to get help to bury his body. When he came back with the help to assist in the unexpected funeral, Chamness was gone—and the pack of goods with him. Afterward Chamness was really killed and the party who did the deed, having heard of the Riley Hastings incident, cut off Chamness' head, stuck it up on a stump and said, "Now, damn you, you will not get away this time."

One day while Old John had a small sawmill and grist mill on Little Snake creek, a few miles east of Purdy, my father came by the mill, and down the road, below the mill, on the bank of the creek, he saw Old John sitting and enquired what was the matter with him, to which Chamness replied, "Doc, see that big sawlog lying down there in the creek? Well, I had cut down the tree from which that log came, up on the hillside, and was trying to get it down to the road to take it up to the mill, without letting it roll into the creek, when the props gave way and the damn thing rolled over me from head to foot and made me sort of sick."

Another day my father stopped at a church some three miles east of Purdy and while he was talking to some other men, old John came up and asked him if he was going to Purdy, to which my father replied that he was, and old John said, "I believe I will go with you." Father said, "All right, get your horse." Old John said, "I have no horse." Father said, "You can't keep up with Frank"—for Frank was a famous saddle horse, but old John said, "I'll bet you the whisky to the crowd at Joe Walker's grocery that I can beat you to town." Frankly said, "All right," and old John walked on. Father started directly, turned a bend in the road—and no old John was in sight. He made Frank pace, then made him gallop, and when on the top of a big hill on the east side of Purdy, he saw old John walk into the public square, hat in hand and said he could imagine he heard him give a yell, notwithstanding he was too far away to be heard. The size of the crowd at Joe Walker's grocery, when the doctor reached there, can be imagined.

One day in Purdy, during the turbulent times when there was organized what was called a Brownlow Militia, composed of negroes and Charlie Chamness had been well but not very favorably known, after Charlie had been sick for some time, the word came from his home on the east side that Charlie had died. Present in the crowd where the news was delivered, then stood Anderson Jones, the local barber and fiddler—a negro who would not steal and who would fight anything that were half-as the boys used to say. When the supposedly sad announcement was made, Anderson remarked "I wish Aunt Lecky Hurst had known that Charlie Chamness was going to die" and on being asked why, Anderson replied, "That was the finest chance I ever sent a letter to hell since I have lived in Purdy." By way of explanation, I will say that Aunt Lecky was the estimable widow of the notorious Col. Pleading Hurst, who during the civil war, burned, slew and robbed to his heart's content—but in justice to the Col. it has been said that the beginning of that historical unpleasantness between the North and South, he was in sympathy with the South but was driven to the other side by personal persecution.

One other and I am done with the Chamness family, of whom I remember Taylor as a real good fellow.

WOMAN 97 YEARS OLD GRANDMOTHER TO 140

ANNISTON, Ala.—With descendants living in nearly every section of Georgia, South Carolina and Alabama, Mrs. Fannie Patterson, of Gordon county, Georgia, in her 97th year, has six of her eight children living, 57 grandchildren 52 great-grandchildren and 24 great-great-grandchildren. And this great-great-grandmother, a daughter and a granddaughter are all living together in the old home place in Gordon county. Mrs. Patterson was born in Charleston, S. C., and will be 98 years old on August 25. Five generations were represented in a group picture made here at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Ella Trammell, whose mother, Mrs. Mary E. Moore, 78, has just returned to her home in Rome after a visit. Mrs. Moore is the oldest daughter of Mrs. Patterson.

OVER THE PHONE.

"Hello! Is this Mr. Jenson?"
"Yes."
"This is Smith. Can I borrow your auto for the afternoon?"
"Why, no. I shouldn't think you'd have the face to ask for it."
"I haven't. That's why I'm asking over the phone."

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